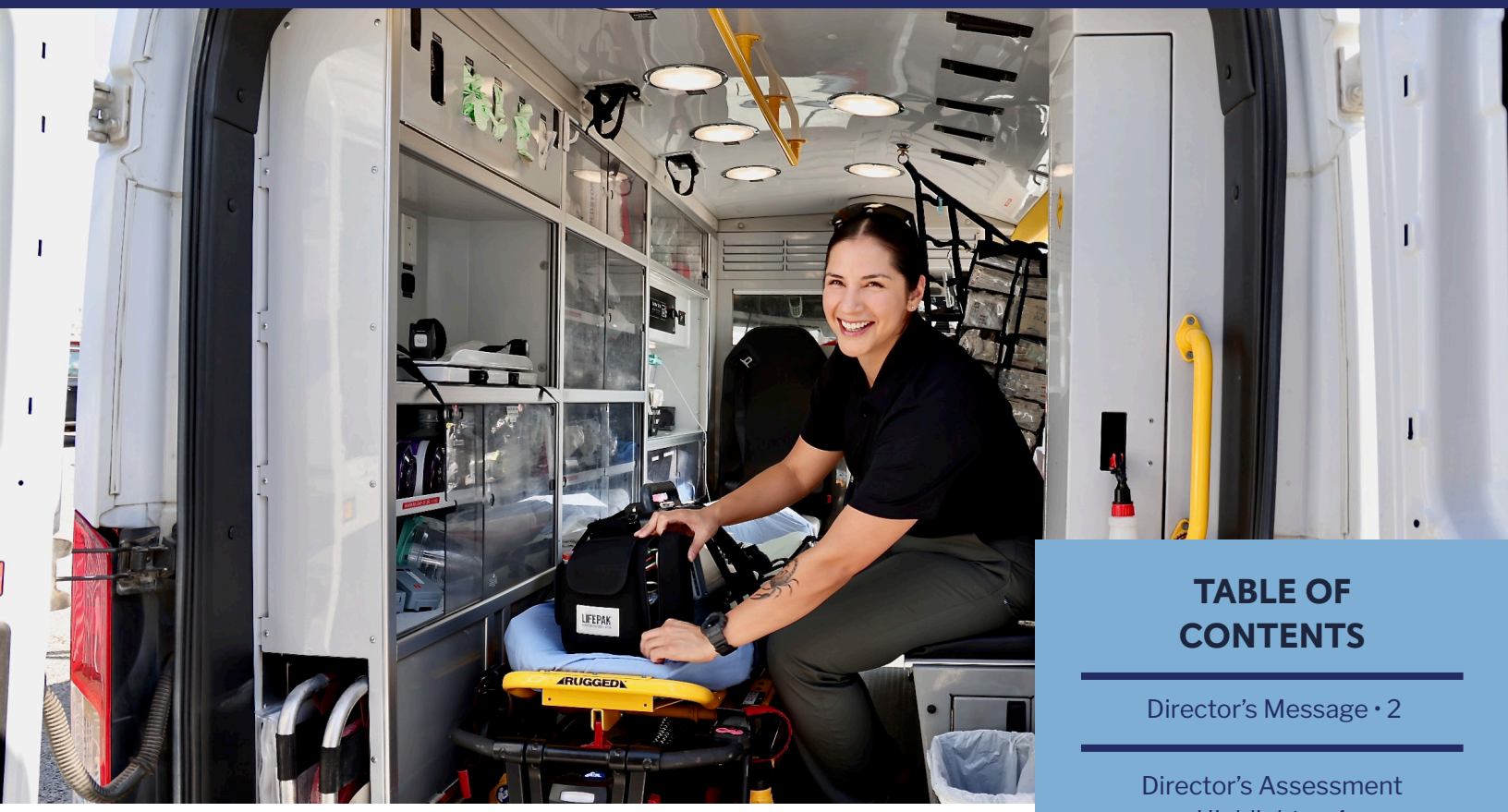
DEFENSE HEALTH NETWORK PACIFIC RIM

NAVAL MEDICAL FORCES PACIFIC

PACIFIC PULSE



Navy Corpsmen Ride-Along with Local Ambulance Paramedics to Bolster Patient Care and Readiness

Hospitalman Jessica Sanderson, from San Tan Valley, Arizona, gears up for her first day in the field as part of a groundbreaking ride-along partnership between NMRTC Twentynine Palms and the Morongo Basin Ambulance Association, June 5, 2025. The program places Navy corpsmen alongside seasoned paramedics during real emergency calls across a 2,700-square-mile region, providing hands-on experience that sharpens clinical judgment, builds operational readiness, and strengthens military-civilian medical collaboration (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher C. Jones, NHTP/NMRTC Twentynine Palms public affairs officer).

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A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. VALDES

Dear Team,

As I prepare to turn over Naval Medical Forces Pacific and Defense Health Network Pacific Rim to Rear Adm. Kevin Brown at the end of the month, I'm proud to share the latest edition of our newsletter, and my last as your Commander and Director. For the past three years, I have been consistently impressed by the dedication and collaboration evident across our network and region—Rear Adm. Brown is inheriting a truly outstanding organization, well-positioned for continued success.

This month's newsletter is a testament to the incredible work you all do every day to improve health, build readiness, and ensure the delivery of exceptional healthcare, anytime, anywhere.

Inside, you'll find examples of our commitment to collaboration, from USNH/USNMRTC Yokosuka's OB/GYN support for NHC/NMRTC Lemoore, to USNH/USNMRTC Guam's discussions about supporting clinical sustainment for Reservists, to the multi-national support provided by Okinawa's Blood Bank to Balikatan 2025. These efforts highlight the strength we gain when we work together to optimize resources and share expertise.

You'll also see how we are embracing innovation and modernizing our practices to better serve our patients and strengthen our force. From the introduction of routine ultrasound services at NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms to the piloting of mental health apps at NAS Fallon, we are constantly seeking new ways to improve access to care and enhance the well-being of our service members and their families.

(Continued on p. 3)

Rear. Adm. Guido Valdes

DHA PRIORITIES:

- Enabling combat support to the joint force in competition, crisis, or conflict
- Building a modernized, integrated, and resilient health delivery system
- Dedicated and inspired teams of professionals driving military health's next evolution

A MESSAGE FROM REAR ADM. VALDES

Driving these efforts is a dedication to cutting-edge research and development. NMR&D has been focused on advancements in directed energy health effects, collaborative efforts to monitor global health threats, and blast injury mitigation, enhancing warfighter readiness and helping guide operational and public health policy and practices.

Readiness remains a top priority, and this newsletter showcases our commitment to training, equipping, and enhancing our medical force. The mass casualty drills, combat care training, and skills fairs highlighted this month demonstrate our proactive approach to ensuring we are prepared to meet any challenge.

Our EXMEDS are strengthening capabilities through key partnerships, demonstrated by recent joint training with the Air Force and Seabees.

Finally, this newsletter is filled with examples of our commitment to excellence, from the Joint Commission survey praising NH/NMRTC Bremerton's preparedness to the recognition of our talented staff through awards and professional development opportunities.

Thank you for your continued hard work and dedication. Your efforts are vital to our mission of providing world-class healthcare and supporting the readiness of our armed forces. Keep up the great work!

Respectfully,
RDML Guido Valdes, MC, USN
Commander, Naval Medical Forces Pacific
Director, Defense Health Network Pacific Rim

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Amos, an OB/GYN provider from USNH Yokosuka, temporarily supported NHC Lemoore's OB/GYN department, April 26-May 14. (Photo courtesy of Elaine Heirigs)

Surgeon General's Lines of Efforts:

LOE 1. Deliver Expeditionary Medicine Systems (EXMEDS)

LOE 2. Increase Sailor and Marine Deployability

LOE 3. Provide Quality Healthcare and Patient Safety Across the Naval Force

LOE 4. Recruit and Retain Navy Medicine Shipmates

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

USNH Yokosuka OB/GYN Support to Lemoore

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Amos, an OB/GYN provider from USNH Yokosuka, temporarily supported NHC Lemoore's OB/GYN department, April 26-May 14. He integrated into the clinic's external resource sharing agreement (ERSA) with Adventist Health Hanford Hospital, located 15 miles from Naval Air Station Lemoore and immediately after he arrived, he performed emergent gynecological surgery and two deliveries. His assistance addresses staffing shortfalls in the MTF's OB/GYN department, a vital service for the remote location.

Lt. Cmdr. Jeffrey Amos, an OB/GYN provider from USNH Yokosuka, temporarily supported NHC Lemoore's OB/GYN department, (Photo courtesy of Elaine Heirigs)

Capt. Torrin Velasquez, USNH Yokouka director and USNMRTC Yokosuka commanding officer.. (Photo courtesy of USNH Yokokasuka.)

Yokosuka Shines at MHS Conference

USNH Yokosuka Director Capt. Velazquez, MTF Deputy Director Capt. Gilliard, Command Master Chief Haylow, Lt. Jonathan Wilson, and Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Plitnik attended the Military Health System conference. Wilson and Plitnik each received a Military Health System Award; Plitnik received the Senior Non-Provider 2024 Allied Health Leadership Excellence Award, and Wilson received the Junior Provider 2024 Allied Health Leadership Excellence Award. Wilson's audiology expertise and dedication and Plitnik's exemplary performance as radiation health officer for mainland Japan earned them the honors.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Joint Commission Survey Praises MTF Preparedness

NH Bremerton underwent a Joint Commission survey April 29-May 1 for accreditation under the Hospital and Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) certification. Surveyors lauded the Mental Health Department for its comprehensive services and culturally competent care, and the Emergency Management Program for its well-developed preparedness plan and proactive disaster response. Surveyors also appreciated the readily available documents, which facilitated their review and demonstrated the MTF's preparedness.

Capt. Brandon Wolf, Naval Hospital Bremerton Director for Strategy and Quality Management department head greets The Joint Commission survey team during their official accreditation visit. (Official Navy photo by Douglas H Stutz)

Foreign Defense Attaché spouses gather for a group photo during their visit to NMCSD as part of the Spring 2025 Foreign Defense Attaché Orientation Program. (Official Navy photo by Marcelo Calero)

Defense Attachés Tour NMC San Diego

The MTF hosted a delegation of defense attaché spouses for a guided tour May 16 as part of the Spring 2025 Foreign Defense Attaché Orientation Program. The Defense Intelligence Agency leads the semiannual initiative on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The itinerary included a visit to the BioSkills Department to observe advanced surgical training techniques, a walkthrough of the Virtual Medical Operations Center demonstrating the use of real-time data and coordination platforms, and a stop at the Comprehensive Combat and Complex Casualty Care facility. The visit left a lasting impression, inspiring some spouses to consider advocating for similar health care services and support models for their countries' armed forces based on NMCSD's best practices.

DIRECTOR'S ASSESSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

USNH Guam and VA Explore Expanded Partnership

On May 15, MTF leadership met with the acting director for Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Healthcare (VAPIHCS) and VAPIHCS staff at the hospital and virtually to discuss expanding, optimizing, and improving health care delivery to beneficiaries, including VA patients. An agreement with the VA could increase specific service lines, such as physical and occupational therapy, inpatient nursing, and gastrointestinal specialty care. Having MTF staff serve the VA population will also increase their knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for a ready medical force in times of conflict.

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Guam Director Capt. Joel Schofer, Deputy Director Capt. Virginia Damin, and Command Master Chief Anthony Royal pose for a picture next to a sign for the hospital, April 6, 2025. (Official Navy photo by HM1 Clien Lester Guico)

U.S. Naval Hospital Guam

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Reservists Seek Guam Training Partnership

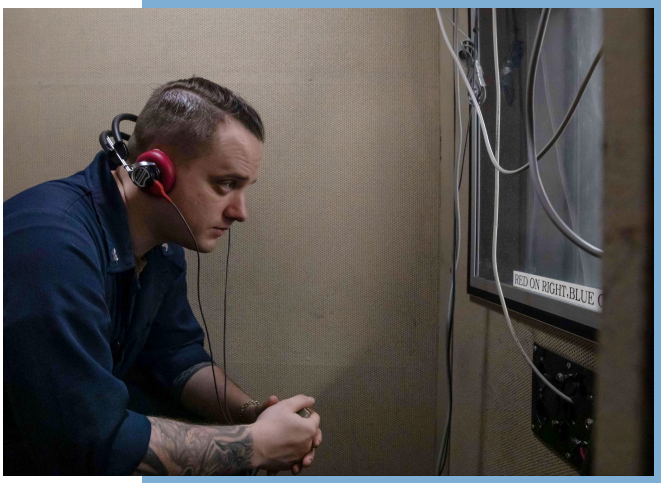
On May 5, USNH /USNMRTC Guam leadership hosted a meet and greet with leadership from Navy Reserve (NR) NMRTC San Diego and the Navy Recruiting Command (NRC) Guam commanding officer. The NR NMRTC San Diego commanding officer, Capt. Bundt, initiated the meeting to discuss a potential memorandum of agreement/understanding (MOA/MOU) for reservists to use rescheduled drill time for training and clinical sustainment at USNH Guam, outside of the annual two-week requirement. Discussions focused on leveraging Guam's unique attributes to provide skills sustainment and build cohesion between reserve and active-duty staff corps.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Improving Hearing Conservation in Japan

The USNH Yokosuka's regional audiology technician supervisor Teresa Villanueva conducted a technical assistance visit to Branch Health Clinic (BHC) Chinhae that enhanced the skills of three hearing conservation technicians at the clinic. Villanueva evaluated the primary technician's competency and reviewed the clinic's hearing conservation program, ensuring adherence to guidelines and verifying current booth and audiometer certifications. The audio booth was recalibrated and recertified.

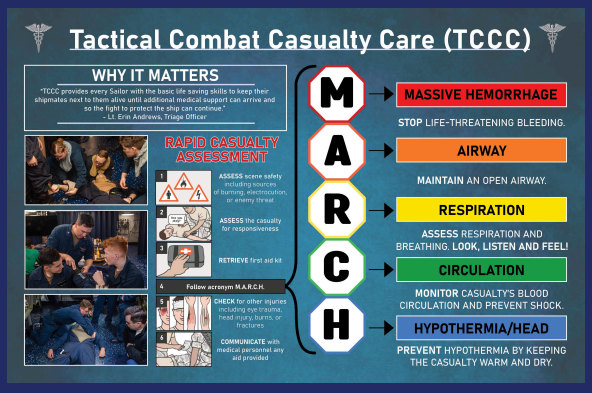


A Sailor takes an audiogram aboard USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) Aug. 4, 2021. Sailors have their hearing evaluated annually in order to track and prevent hearing degradation. (DVIDS)

USNMRTC Yokosuka conducted a mass casualty drill at USNH Yokosuka, (Official Navy photo by Ai Hazama)

Mass Casualty Plan Tested

USNH Yokosuka and BHC Atsugi collaborated on a spring mass casualty drill. Emergency teams treated and stabilized simulated casualties, testing rapid deployment of critical medical care and patient movement. A U.S. Air Force 459th Airlift Squadron helicopter transported patients between Yokosuka and BHC Atsugi, highlighting joint service coordination. The drill also tested the MASCAL Communications Plan, ensuring seamless coordination between medical personnel, military units and partners.



A graphic illustration that depicts tactical combat casualty care. (DVIDS)

First Responders Train in Combat Care

BHC/NMRTU Chinhae, child clinic to USNH /USNMRTC Yokosuka, hosted a Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) course for 15 master-at-arms personnel assigned to Commander Fleet Activities, Chinhae (CFAC). The course enhanced medical readiness at the clinic by training first responders in field leadership, preparing participants to conduct Role I and Role II healthcare operations in austere combat environments.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

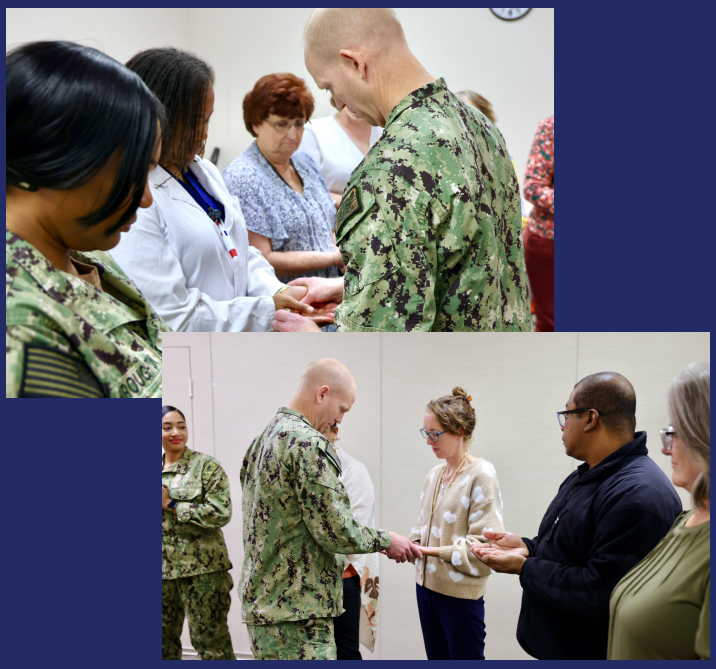
Build Unity within the Department

Navy Nurses Celebrate 117 Years

On May 13, uniformed nurses assigned to NMRTC Twentynine Palms' honored the 117th birthday of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps with a traditional ceremony at NH Twentynine Palms, spearheaded by the Director of Nursing Services, Capt. Mark Miller. The event, reflected on the history of the Nurse Corps and their commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care in support of DHA's mission. By honoring their heritage and fostering a sense of unity, the Nurse Corps strengthens its dedication to providing exceptional care within the DHA's integrated healthcare system.

Cmdr. Donna Burge and Lt. j.g. Marisela Ferguson cut the Navy Nurse Corps birthday cake. (Official Navy photo by Christopher Jones)

Nurses at NH/NMRTC Twentynine Palms celebrate the Navy Nurse Corps' 117th birthday. (Official Navy photo by Christopher Jones)



Blessing of the Hands. (Official Navy photo by Christopher Jones)

Blessing of the Hands at NH Twentynine Palms

Chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Nicholas Suddath led a "Blessing of the Hands" ceremony for more than 30 active duty and civilian nurses at the hospital on May 14. This spiritual affirmation of the nursing staff's dedication to healing and compassionate care supports the DHA's mission to provide high-quality care. By acknowledging the profound impact of their work and blessing their hands, the ceremony reinforces values of empathy and service, strengthening the nurses' commitment to compassionate, holistic care and fostering a supportive environment for healthcare professionals within the military community.

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

NHC Lemoore Honors Nursing Excellence

The MTF celebrated the nursing profession May 6-13 with a week of events that fostered camaraderie and honored the nursing staff's vital contributions to healthcare delivery. Cmdr. Ken Espinosa, Naval Air Station Lemoore's chaplain, blessed the hands of staff nurses, continuing the time-honored tradition. The clinic also announced its annual nursing recognition program winner, Aquina Tucker. A medical home port provider's nomination described Tucker's care for a young patient as "incredible," noting she took the "helm" to get the patient to the right level of care, retrieving emergency room paperwork, contacting specialists, and placing urgent referrals to ensure timely access to specialty care.

Then Lt. Cmdr. Ken Espinosa prays during the command's Sea Warrior Leadership Course (SWLC) graduation at Naval Air Station North Island. (DVIDS)

Balboa Wardroom Aids the Homeless

Fifteen officers from NMRTC San Diego who work at NMC San Diego partnered with the Streets of Hope to distribute donated food to the local homeless population during a community relations event May 19.

Aerial view of NMC San Diego.

USNH Guam Hosts Hospital Week

The MTF partnered with local hospitals Guam Regional Medical City and Guam Memorial Authority celebrated National Hospital Week from May 12-16. USNH Guam hosted the opening ceremony to kick off the week-long event at various locations

REBUILDING OUR MILITARY

Build Unity within the Department

Leadership Skills Sharpened in Okinawa

On May 16, leaders from USNH Okinawa's Directorate of Public Health Service participated in a Strengths Discovery Encounter (SDE) leadership retreat led by Chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Gregory Kearns. The retreat utilized the American Strengths Center (ASC) Military Edition of SDE, a program designed to help the military community invest in their talents and strengths to become high-functioning leaders. This hands-on training, based on 20 years of experience in the Strengths Movement, is presented in collaboration with military chaplains and leverages a fast-paced, engaging approach to foster relational intelligence and leadership skills.

Lt. Cmdr. Gregory Kearns, gives the invocation during a commissioning ceremony at Camp Shields, Mar. 28, 2025. (DVIDS)

An ultrasound technician with 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support examines a patient's thyroid. (DVIDS)

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Routine Ultrasound Services for Active Duty at NH Twentynine Palms

Led by Lt. Cmdr. Brandon DuGar, the radiology department now offers routine ultrasound services to active-duty service members, eliminating previous deferrals of non-obstetric referrals. This expansion, enabled by filling two vacant contractor positions, improves access to care and enhances health readiness by providing convenient diagnostic services at the MTF. Offering in-house imaging reduces reliance on outside referrals and optimizes health care delivery, improving patient outcomes and ensuring efficient resource utilization.

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

Testing for Clotting Factors Returns to NH Twentynine Palms

The laboratory, led by Lt. Cmdr. Clara Pangco, will resume in-house D-Dimer and Fibrinogen testing by the end of June with the addition of a new Coag Analyzer. This enhancement will improve the efficiency and timeliness of diagnostic testing, leading to faster, more accurate diagnoses and treatment decisions.

Blood samples drawn at McDonald Army Medical Center. (DVIDS)

Mental Health App Piloted at NAS Fallon

Lt. Marsades Ceasar, a social worker in NHC Lemoore's Mental Health Department, visited Naval Air Station Fallon May 10-11 to introduce the Headspace application, which offers on-demand mental health support. The Navy Culture and Force Resilience Office from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, N17, selected Naval Air Station Fallon to pilot the user-friendly, evidence-based wellness platform designed to support subclinical mental health needs.

Lt. Marsades Caesar

OSIE Team Examines Health, Safety at NAS Whidbey Island

On May 18, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, where the MTF is located, concluded in-briefs and initial out-briefs for a 2025 DoD On-Site Installation Evaluation (OSIE) site visit, with a formal report expected in 75 days. The OSIE aims to identify risk and protective factors related to harmful behaviors and assess quality of life at NASWI. The MTF's Deputy Director Capt. Christopher Keith attended the in-brief, a leadership session with major tenant commands, and focus groups with Sailors. Items of concerns included the distance to SAFE exams (80-90 minutes away in Everett) and the need to improve awareness and access to virtual mental health care options for Sailors.

DEFEND THE NATION

Innovate and Modernize

NMC San Diego Hosts Virtual Research Competition

The MTF hosted the 40th Navy-Wide Academic Research Competition, a virtual event May 16. Military medical professionals and researchers from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and NMC San Diego presented clinical and scientific research supporting operational medicine, patient care and force readiness. The competition fosters collaboration, innovation and evidence-based care to ensure warfighter readiness and resilience.

NMC San Diego

Dental Rodeo Boosts Okinawa Readiness

Branch Dental Clinic Kinser held a "dental readiness rodeo" May 21, completing 55 dental exams for 3d Marine Logistics Group warfighters. The clinic plans to use this model to improve operational dental readiness island-wide and enhance access to care by bringing providers together for screening, treatment, and cleaning closer to service members. This is one way the hospital supports warfighters in the western Indo-Pacific, ensuring they are fit to fight by consolidating appointments for essential screenings.

Sigonella Dental Directorate conducted its quarterly Dental Field Chair Mission. (DVIDS)

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Sailors Showcase Careers in Military Medicine

Cmdr. Christina Carter, Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (HM1) Hope Perrault, HM2 Thalia Vasquez (all NMRTC Twentynine Palms staff assigned to NH Twentynine Palms) along with HM2 Alvarez Kenyon and HM2 Martin (7th Regiment) participated in a May 1 Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Expo at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center (MCAGCC) Twentynine Palms. The expo exposed 60 local high school students to military careers. Navy Medicine sailors highlighted hospital corpsman and NROTC career paths, while Greenside HMs showcased field medicine, allowing students to practice casualty transport. Several students expressed interest in Navy Medicine careers, supporting the DHA mission of inspiring future healthcare professionals and military healthcare workforce readiness.

From left, Cmdr. Christina Carter, HM2 Alvarez Kenyon, HM2 Mark Martin, HM2 Thalia Vasquez, and HM1 Hope Perrault during the MOS Expo. (DVIDS).

Temporary Dental Sterilization Consolidation

On April 22, HM3 Emmanuel Del Villar (Directorate of Surgical Services) coordinated the temporary consolidation of dental sterile processing to NHC Lemoore's main building. He ensured proper transport of items, maintaining processing standards and access to care. This supports staff training, process improvements based on The Joint Commission (TJC) findings, and command-wide standardization of sterile processing.

Oak Harbor Nurses Sharpen Skills

As part of nurses recognition week, NMRTC Oak Harbor Nurse Corps officers from NHC Lemoore conducted a clinical sustainment skills fair May 9-12 as part of their ongoing readiness mission. The training provided attendees the opportunity to practice venipuncture, medication administration, and patient assessments and was open to all staff.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

USACE Reviews Antiterrorism Measures

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) conducted a site visit at NHC Oak Harbor May 5-6, meeting with the emergency manager and security teams to complete comprehensive assessments of antiterrorism physical security measures focusing on compliance with Department of Defense (DoD) standards.

Trauma Team Prepares for Evaluation

Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System (ERSS) 4 from USNMRTC Guam who work at USNH Guam, attended Navy Trauma Training Center (NTTC) training in Los Angeles, CA, from April 27 to May 13, 2025. This training is required for the ERSS team before their operational readiness evaluation (ORE) scheduled for June 2025.

Lt. Cmdr. Susan Bullard, emergency medicine physician, leads a mass casualty exercise at the NTTC. (U.S. Navy photo by Regena Kowitz)

Photo courtesy of HM3 Savannah Casey.

NH Camp Pendleton Drill Prepares Staff for Emergencies

The MTF conducted its yearly mass evacuation drill, combined with a Code Red (fire alarm), on May 8. Patient care was not affected. Outpatients received instructions from staff on procedures in the event of a real alarm, and inpatient wards practiced evacuating mannequins using chair sleds. The hospital achieved full staff accountability within 25 minutes, and the drill concluded 30 minutes after it began.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Bremerton Personnel Train at Madigan

Sixteen personnel assigned to NMRTC Bremerton who work at NH Bremerton participated in Madigan's three-day Capstone Simulation Event from May 13-15, a joint-service training opportunity focused on realistic training in Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) and emergency management during a mass casualty situation. The training focused on operating as a bed team, the cornerstone of Role 2 expeditionary medical care, to provide immediate care and stabilization for severely injured individuals in field and combat settings before transport to higher-level facilities. On May 14, Cmdrs. Kirk and Certano observed the training, and Lt. Cmdr. Paull served as an instructor. The following thirteen Sailors participated for the entire event:

- From the Directorate of Healthcare Support: Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (HM2) Cole, HM2 Veenstra, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Class Rima, Hospitalman (HN) Williams, HN Ellithorp Land, and Hospitalman Apprentice Gallang.
- From Branch Health Clinic Puget Sound Naval Shipyard: HN Cobbs and HN Langit.
- From Branch Health Clinic Everett: Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Johnston, Hm2 Robinson, HM2 Vera, HM3 McGee, and HN Dauber.

HM2 Janard Cole, along with other corpsmen, took part in a joint scenario-based field Tactical Combat Casualty Care. Washington (Official Navy photo by Douglas H Stutz)

Nurse residency graduates. (Photo courtesy of Curtis Hill)

NH Camp Pendleton Graduates Nurse Residents

Seven nurses graduated from the Directorate of Nursing Services residency program on May 13. The 12-week program includes rotations and cross-training in departments such as the laboratory, post-anesthesia care unit, ambulatory procedure unit, intensive care unit and emergency department.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Accreditation Review at NH Camp Pendleton

The American Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) conducted its 10-year Sponsoring Institution Site Visit May 15. Interviews were conducted with four cadres representing all training aspects of the Graduate Medical Education (GME) Programs. The site inspector's debrief revealed no significant findings. The ACGME Review Committee will review the formal report in October for a final determination of accreditation status.

Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton

Blood donations hang on a rack after collection. (DVIDS)

BHC China Lake Collects Life-Saving Blood

Led by Officer in Charge Cmdr. William Paul Martin, NH Twentynine Palms' BHC China Lake hosted the Houchin Community Blood Bank for a blood drive May 7. Exceeding its goal of 34 units, the drive collected 49 units from 57 registered donors, including 20 first-time donors, potentially saving 147 lives. This initiative contributes to community health and well-being, ensuring blood supply readiness for military and civilian needs, and promoting a culture of service within the military community.

Corpsman from Lemoore Unit Supports Marines at Presidio

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Thomas Hanson, from Naval Medical Administrative Unit Monterey, provided operational medical coverage for the Presidio of Monterey Marine Detachment on May 16. Hanson supported the Marines during physical training exercises and a ruck march, ensuring their safety and readiness to respond to medical emergencies. NMAU's commitment to cross-service cooperation and these joint activities promote interoperability, including shared medical support during base-wide events.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

Oak Harbor CMO Ensures Deployment Readiness

Chief Medical Officer Cmdr. D. Foster, who is assigned to NMRTC Oak Harbor and works at NHC Oak Harbor, performed 32 deployment physicals and 12 Periodic Health Assessments in support of Theater Undersea Surveillance Command Pacific deployment missions. In addition, the CMO completed seven packages supporting Fleet Readiness Squadron deployments, transfers to operational units and reenlistments. All 51 requests were received within the past two weeks.

Theater Undersea Surveillance Command. (DVIDS)

Airmen assigned to the 18th Medical Group decontaminate a simulated patient during a casualty care flow. (DVIDS)

USNH Guam Hosts Hospital Week

The MTF partnered with local hospitals Guam Regional Medical City and Guam Memorial Authority celebrated National Hospital Week from May 12-16. USNH Guam hosted the opening ceremony to kick off the week-long event at various locations

Okinawa Preps for CBRN Events

Staff assigned to U.S. Naval Medical Readiness and Training Command (USNMRTC) Okinawa who work at USNH Okinawa conducted a full-scale mass casualty decontamination exercise simulating a CBRN event, enhancing the hospital's readiness. This FY25 exercise supported DHA's mission to ensure integration of ready medical forces and healthcare delivery, challenged staff, stressed emergency systems, and built partnerships with local commands, including Marine Corps Installations Pacific and the USAF 18th Medical Group. The exercise will inform future resource decisions and training plans, ensuring a ready medical force.

BUILD READINESS AND SUPPORT LETHALITY

Train, Equip, Enhance

USNH Okinawa Supports Cognitive Readiness

On May 15, the hospital's directorate for public health provided ANAM (Automated Neuropsychological Assessment) testing training, a key tool for ensuring warfighter cognitive readiness. During the training, a USAF request for ANAM equipment and support for a real-world contingency led to the rapid testing of 147 airmen within 24 hours. The unit's commanders lauded the hospital's rapid support, directly contributing to deployment readiness across INDOPACOM.

U.S. Air National Guard service members from the 119th Civil Engineer Squadron take a baseline neuro-cognitive assessment known as an Automated Neuropsychological Assessment Metric (ANAM). (DVIDS)

Annual Nursing and Corpsmen Skills Fair. (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher C. Jones)

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Skills Fair Enhances Clinical Readiness

240 nurses, corpsmen, and staff honed clinical and operational skills at the NH Twentynine Palms' Annual Nursing and Corpsmen Skills Fair. Spearheaded by Emergency Department Nurse Lt. Cmdr. Nicolle Leftwich, the fair featured hands-on training in areas such as blood administration, AED and crash cart usage, high-level disinfection, suicide screening, fall prevention, and medication delivery using upgraded Alaris infusion pumps. Skills were selected based on regulatory requirements and command trends, reflecting the command's commitment to high-quality care, patient safety, and mission readiness in support of the DHA mission.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Corpsman's Expertise Recognized Nationally

HM1 Meosha Williams, NH Twentynine Palms' laboratory leading petty officer, was selected as the "Navy Enlisted Member at Large" for the Society of American Federal Medical Laboratory Scientists (SAFMLS). This selection supports the DHA mission by enhancing her expertise, fostering collaboration, and advocating for Navy medical laboratory professionals, improving the quality and standardization of diagnostic services for service members and families and contributing to a more skilled healthcare workforce.

HM Moesha Williams (Photo courtesy of Christopher Jones)

Lemoore Achieves 100% Career Development Board Compliance

HM2 Shaylee Lines recently assumed the role of department/division career development team leader. In mid-April, she conducted career development boards for five sailors, guiding them through their career paths. Her contributions to the Directorates for Clinical Support Services and Dental Services helped the command achieve 100% compliance for career development boards. As a new career development team leader, Lines guided Lemoore's sailors through the career development board process, ensuring they have clear career paths within Navy Medicine and the DHA.

Dental Leadership Connects in Tokyo

The Director of Branch Clinics Capt. Johvin Perry attended the Tri-service Dental Conference and met with Deputy Corps Chief Rear Adm. Brafford, Senior Dental Detailer Capt. Suffridge, and other dental officers from the greater Japan area at the Sanno Hotel in Tokyo.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

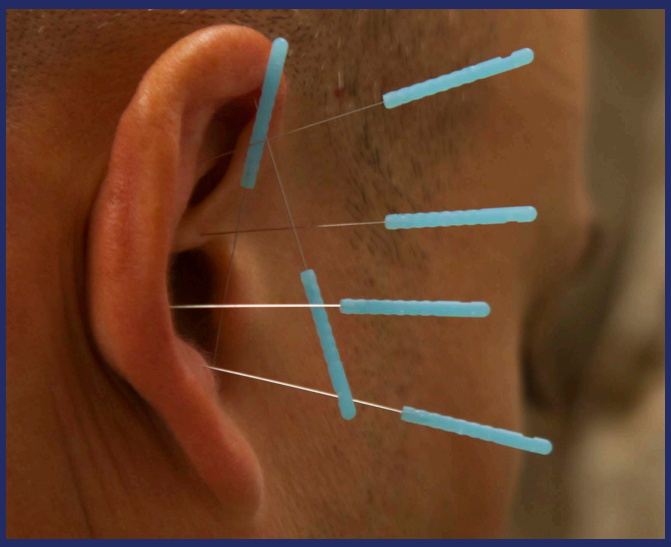
Oak Harbor Staff Inspires Students

Cmdr. White, Lt. Cmdr. Slocum, Lt. Abeyratne, Lt. j.g. May, and HM3 McNeill, who work at NHC Oak Harbor and are assigned to NMRTC Oak Harbor, hosted a military medicine panel for students at Oak Harbor High School today. They shared their experiences, highlighted opportunities in military medicine, and answered student questions. The event, facilitated by Oak Harbor High School graduate Lt. j.g. May, directly supports recruitment and retention efforts.

Naval Health Clinic Oak Harbor

Corpsmen Trained in Forensic Exams

Six hospital corpsmen from USNH Yokosuka's BHC Chinhae completed Part I of Sexual Assault Forensic Medical Examiner (SAMFE) training. The training focused on properly completing a sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE) kit, enhancing their ability to provide expert and efficient medical care to sexual assault victims.



Acupuncture needles protrude from the ear of a patient. (DVIDS)

IDCs Learn Acupuncture for Pain Management

Capt. Andreas Stiller provided acupuncture training at USNH Yokosuka's BHC Chinhae to nine independent duty corpsmen (IDCs) and dental staff members—six from Camp Walker Army Medical Center and three from BHC Chinhae. The training expands the providers' ability to treat pain, which benefits from this alternative therapy. This addition to the IDCs' skillset can assist with reducing chronic and acute pain in warfighters, especially when pain medication access is limited.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

Community Input Drives Healthcare Improvements

On May 6, USNH Yokosuka held a Patient and Family Partnership Council meeting onboard Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, facilitating direct communication between community members and MTF leadership to streamline healthcare delivery. The meeting addressed community concerns including informed and implied consent in the obstetrics orientation packet, standardizing the screening mammogram ordering process, updating the off-base English-speaking medical facility list, and clarifying the specialty referral process.

U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL
YOKOSUKA JAPAN
QUALITAS
PATIENT AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
COUNCIL SCHEDULE
• MAY 6, 1600-1700 AOB AUDITORIUM CRC BLDG
• JUNE 3, 1145-1245 COMMAND AUDITORIUM USNH YOKOSUKA (3RD FLOOR)
• JULY 8, 1600-1700 AOB AUDITORIUM CRC BLDG
• AUGUST 12, 0900-1000 FUYU ROOM CRC BLDG
To our community members- if there is a specialty or any medical personnel you are hoping to meet, please let us know so we can try our best to ensure attendance. You can also send in questions beforehand to our distro email:
dha.yokosuka.yokosuka-nh.list.pfpc@health.mil

Graphic from USNH Yokosuka's Facebook page.

NHC Lemoore Nurse Earns Risk Management Credential

Melian Johnson, the MTF's risk manager nurse, earned her Certified Professional in Healthcare Risk Management credential April 26. The certification, which requires extensive education, experience and passing an exam, demonstrates her dedication to patient safety and risk management, proving her expertise in the field.

Melian Johnson

China Lake Sailor Reenlists

On May 19, Officer in Charge Cmdr. William Paul Martin of NMRTC Twentynine Palms' Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Unit China Lake, which supports BHC China Lake, officiated the reenlistment ceremony for Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Wierzbicki. Retaining experienced personnel like Wierzbicki ensures continuity of high-quality care and strengthens institutional knowledge.

TAKING CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Grow Our Talent

EMT Graduates Serve Okinawa

USNH Okinawa hosted an EMT graduation on May 16. Graduates included students from U.S. Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command (USNMRTC) Okinawa who work at the MTF, as well as personnel from Marine Corps Installations Pacific (MCIPAC) Federal Fire and III Marine Expeditionary Force commands. The hospital trains and certifies corpsmen and other medical responders to staff its eight ambulances, supporting emergency services across Okinawa and enabling patient movement and medical evacuation. Congratulations to the newest EMT course graduates:

- HR Everett, T.
- HA LoVerme
- HA Manner
- HA Villanueva
- HN Adams
- HN Garcia
- HN Le
- HN Marrerogonzales
- HM3 Cruz Rivera
- HM3 Komelski
- Lance Cpl. Beetz
- Master Labor Contract Oyadomari, S.
- Master Labor Contract Takuya, T.

Photos by Isaac "Trey" Savitz

Okinawa Corpsman's Essay Wins Prize

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Andrea Mayrose who is assigned to USNMRTC Okinawa and works at USNH Okinawa received second prize in the Naval Institute's Enlisted Prize Essay Contest this year. She will receive $2,000, a Naval Institute membership, and will be honored at an award ceremony at the annual WEST Conference in San Diego next February. Her essay will be published in an upcoming issue of *Proceedings* magazine.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

State Lawmaker Tours Remote China Lake Clinic

Newly elected Assemblymember Stan Ellis (CA 32nd District) and Deputy Director Cody Criswell visited NH Twentynine Palms' BHC China Lake. The clinic's Officer in Charge Cmdr. William "PJ" Martin toured the visitors through the clinic and explained healthcare challenges faced by beneficiaries in the remote location, strengthening community relations. This visit fostered stakeholder relationships and informed them about the specific needs of beneficiaries in geographically isolated areas, contributing to improved healthcare delivery.

Assembleymember Stan Ellis, third from right, and Cmdr. William "PJ" Martin, right, pose for a group photo during Ellis' visit to China Lake.

Twentynine Palms Nurses Earn DAISY Awards

The hospital recognized Lt. j.g. Aaron Gacad and Lt. Affeya Jackson from the Maternal Infant Nursing Department as 2025 DAISY Award honorees for patient-centered care. Nineteen other nurses were nominated across various departments and clinics. This recognition supports the DHA's mission by reinforcing and celebrating nursing excellence. By acknowledging nominees across multiple departments, the hospital also fosters a culture of quality, compassion and continuous improvement, essential for delivering integrated, affordable and high-quality health services.

Lt. j.g. Aaron Gacad, left, receiving the DAISY Award. (Official Navy photo by Christopher Jones)

Bremerton Corpsman Receives Citizen Award

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class John Palmer, who is assigned to NMRTC Bremerton and works in NH Bremerton's main operating room as leading petty officer, and his wife received a Citizen Service Citation Award on May 14 from the Edmonds, Washington, Police Department. The city recognized the Palmers for providing immediate aid at a 2024 motor vehicle accident, applying emergency first aid until first responders arrived.

DHA IN ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

NHC Lemoore and TriWest Discuss Way Forward

The MTF hosted its first TRICARE Integration Briefing on May 19. Led by Thecly Scott, TriWest Southern California coalition leaders and clinic staff, led by NHC Lemoore Director Capt. Aaron Werbel, reviewed current operations and the way forward regarding TRICARE beneficiary support.

Naval Health Clinic Lemoore

USNH/USNMRTC Okinawa Staff Paddle to Victory

On May 5, staff from the hospital and command participated in the 51st Naha Hari Dragon Boat Race at Naha Shinto Wharf. Staff members joined the U.S. Navy Men's Team, which placed third in the Professional Category, beating the Army and Air Force teams. Staff also participated on the U.S. Navy Women's Team, which competed in the semi-professional category and beat the Army and Air Force Women's teams.

Dragon Boat race. (Photos from USNH Okinawa's Facebook page)

INSIDE NMR&D

Scientist Recognized for Work With Directed Energy

Dr. William D'Angelo, director of Directed Energy Health Effects at Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) San Antonio, received the Civilian Service Commendation Medal at the Tri-Service Research Laboratory, on May 6. Recognized for his meritorious service from August 2018 to May 2025, D'Angelo revitalized the command's Directed Energy Program, advanced capabilities with cutting-edge equipment, and fostered innovation—directly enhancing national defense and warfighter readiness.

Dr. William D'Angelo (NAMRU San Antonio)

Navy Medical Research Collaborates with Egyptian Partners for Combatting Influenza

NAMRU EURAFCENT and the Egyptian Center for Research and Regenerative Medicine (ECRRM) met to discuss collaborative efforts on influenza-like illnesses in Cairo, Egypt, on May 26. Collaborative efforts and touch points such as this are critical to maintaining U.S. relationships with partner nations, and for staying abreast of potential health threats to deploying U.S. service members.

Staff with Naval Medical Research Unit (NAMRU) EURAFCENT and the Egyptian Center for Research and Regenerative Medicine (ECRRM). (DVIDS)

NMRC Seeks to Provide Brain Injury Tool to the Services

Naval Medical Research Command (NMRC) investigators and collaborators working in coordination with Navy and Marine Corps Public Health are leading DoD efforts to mitigate the adverse brain health effects of repetitive blast overpressure exposure from weapon systems and explosives. Currently, NMRC and collaborators are working on providing service members access to the Blast Exposure Threshold Survey (BETS), to better assess safe exposure limits. Critical research efforts have provided blast overpressure threshold exposure levels to inform operational exposure limits for DoD personnel that will drive operational and public health policy and practice.

EXMEDS IN FOCUS

NAVY EXMED, Air Force, Train for Joint Operations

Airmen from March Air Reserve Base, California, and Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, trained with Navy medical personnel in a joint integration training with Expeditionary Medical Facility (EMF) 150-Juliet at Naval Expeditionary Medicine Warfighter Development Center (NEMWDC) from May 9-12. The training focused on interoperability between Navy and Air Force medical teams, highlighting shared protocols, including the Joint Trauma Systems and the Clinical Practice Guide, and enhancing communication in fast-paced scenarios.

Air Force and Navy medical personnel load simulated casualties during an EMF training at NEMWDC. (DVIDS)

Seabees Enhance Navy Medicine Training with Field Hospital Build

U.S. Navy Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion ONE (NMCB-1), based in Gulfport, Mississipi, and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FIVE (NMCB-5), based in Port Hueneme, California, supported Expeditionary Medical Facility training at NEMWDC by constructing a functional 50-bed field hospital and enhancing the realism of the exercise in May. The Seabees assembled a seven-wing EMF tent structure designed to replicate a forward-deployed medical facility. As NEMWDC continues to lead the way in expeditionary medical readiness, the integration of the Seabees highlights the Navy's commitment to realistic, team-based training.

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battallion ONE and FIVE assemble a 50-bed field hospital to support an EMF training. (DVIDS)